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FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0616

INFO RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE

RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA 5004

RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 0985

RUEHLI/AMEMBASSY LISBON 1627

RUEHLA/AMCONSUL BARCELONA 2039

RUEHNA/DEA HQS WASHDC

UNCLAS MADRID 002163

SIPDIS

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DEPARTMENT FOR H

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PGOV PREL SNAR SP

SUBJECT: STAFFDEL BRENNAN SEEKS SPANISH COOPERATION IN
STEMMING FLOW OF COLOMBIAN COCAINE

¶1. (U) A staff delegation from the House International Relations Committee and the House Judiciary Committee visited Madrid August 28-30, to discuss narcotics trafficking between Europe and Colombia and other Andean nations. Poloff and DEA attach attended all meetings with Spanish and Colombian officials. During their meetings, the delegation delivered the message that narcotics trafficking -- specifically Colombian cocaine -- is no longer just a U.S. problem and Spain and the rest of Europe must take an increased role in dealing with the issue. The StaffDel met with the Action Committee on Drug Trafficking of Spain's Interior Ministry, and representatives from the Spanish National Police, Civil Guard and Customs. In addition, the StaffDel met with the Colombian Ambassador to Spain Martha Noemi Sanin and Colombian Ambassador to the United Nations Jose Serrano Cadena.

¶2. (U) In preparation for a September 21 joint hearing on the European role in stopping the flow of narcotics, the StaffDel will make the following observations and recommendations to the HIRC:

//OBSERVATIONS//

-- (U) Spain does not dispute that cocaine trafficking is a major problem for Spain and Europe. They agree with the consensus among U.S. and Colombian officials that 40 to 50 percent of all Andean cocaine now goes to Europe.

-- (U) While Spain is clearly working to coordinate efforts between the Spanish National Police, the Civil Guard and Spanish Customs, interagency turf battles seem to be hindering the cooperation efforts.

-- (U) It is evident that Venezuela is the primary stepping-off point for Colombian cocaine en route to Europe.

//RECOMMENDATIONS//

-- (U) Encourage Spain to support Colombia in the war against narco-trafficking.

-- (U) Encourage Spain to take the lead in the European Union in the drug war.

-- (U) Encourage Colombia to seek EU assistance similiar to USG assistance provided through "Plan Colombia."

-- (U) Encourage Spain to be the European leader in soft-side support to Colombia such as assisting demobilized members of

the FARC, planting alternative crops or in projects such as the construction of schools and hospitals.

-- (U) Praise Spain for its work in helping initiate a European/Andean law enforcement liaison office in Lisbon, Portugal, based on the JIATF-S concept.

-- (U) Encourage greater information sharing between Colombian and U.S. agencies.

-- (U) Encourage a much increased Spanish liaison presence in Bogota to improve cooperation with Colombian law enforcement agencies in the fight against drugs, particularly in information sharing.

//COMMENT//

¶3. (SBU). Spain is clearly engaged in the battle to stem the flow of Colombian cocaine and Colombian Ambassador Sanin was quick to express appreciation for Spain's good cooperation with Colombia on this issue. However, resource issues are clearly a problem for Spain's security services; at several points, Spanish interlocutors said that the recent spike in illegal immigration from sub-Saharan Africa is straining their interdiction capabilities. We expect that Spain will maintain a good level of cooperation with Andean countries despite the current resource pressures.

AGUIRRE